SAMUEL/KINGS AND CHRONICLES:
BOOK DIVISIONS AND TEXTUAL COMPOSITION*

JULIO TREBOLLE

An analysis that combines textual and literary criticism allows us to approach the complex editing process of the books of 2 Samuel / 1 Kings and 1 Chronicles. This article focuses on the divisions between these books and the arrangement of the material they comprise within 2 Samuel / 1 Kings 1–3. This is my contribution to the volume in homage to Eugene Ulrich, a pioneer in the study of the editorial history of biblical books based on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint.1

Decisive factors in the editing and canonization of a book are “a fixed arrangement of content” and “the tendency to produce a standardized text.”2 In the transmission of ancient Mesopotamian literature, “Text stability and fixed sequence of tablets within a series are also the criteria by which to define a cuneiform text as standard or canonical.”3 Studies conducted after M. Noth have been focused on reconstructing the redaction history (hereafter “dtr”) of the historical books (Joshua-Kings), without proper consideration of the history of

* The research presented here was possible thanks to a three month stay as Guest Professor at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in September–December 2002. The English translation has been verified by Wilfred G. Watson.


their composition and editing processes. However, the redactional
texts, especially the Deuteronomistic ones, are located especially
at the beginning and end of these books, where editorial activity is more
obvious from duplicate passages and transpositions that give rise to
different textual forms attested by the manuscript tradition. (For some
books, however, much editorial material appears also in the middle;
examples include Joshua and Judges.)

DIVISIONS BETWEEN THE BOOKS:
MULTIPLE ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

The book of Joshua has more than one ending and links up with
Judges in different ways. As noted by A. Rofé, LXX Josh 24:33ab is
connected with Judg 3:12-30, omitting the material in between, which
is largely dtr (1:1-3:11). Since Josh 24:28, 31, 29-30 (according to
the sequence in the LXX) duplicates Judg 2:6-9, it establishes another
link between the two books that omits Judg 1:1-2:5. Literary criticism
has identified another ending in Joshua 23 (dtr) that also joins with
Judg 2:6. Finally, Josh 21:43-45 appears to be an ancient ending of
Joshua that seems connected with Judg 2:8ff. All these endings and
links can only be explained by supposing multiple editions.

The Antiochene Greek text, which sometimes represents the Old
Greek or a form near to it in style, contains in Judg 2:10 a plus that
repeats 3:5-6a. This linking repetition delimits the insertion ascribed
to a Deuteronomistic redaction(s): 2:11-3:4. Moving beyond the pro-
sal made by A. Rofé, it has to be said that the three elements which
comprise LXX Josh 24:33b are not directly connected with Judg 3:12,

4 Alexander Rofé, "The End of the Book of Joshua According to the Septua-
5 Hartmut N. Rösel, *Von Joshua bis Joachin. Untersuchungen zu den deuter-
onomistischen Geschichtsbüchern des Alten Testaments* (VTSup 75; Leiden: Brill,
6 Uwe Becker, *Richterzeit und Königstum. Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien
zum Richterbuch* (BZAW 192; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990) 68-72; Erhard Blum,
"Der kompositionelle Knoten am Übergang von Josua zu Richter. Ein Entflech-
tungsverschlag," in *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature*, ed. M. Vervenne
and J. Lust (BETL 133; Leuven University Press – Peeters, 1997) 181-212.
7 Books of the Pentateuch also conclude with different appendices; cf. E.
Talstra, "Deuteronomy 31. Confusion or Conclusion? The Story of Moses’ Three-
fold Succession," in *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature*, ed. Vervenne
and Lust, 87-103.